

Rules for THE SORCERER'S CAVE

facilis descensus Averno:
noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis;
sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
hoc opus, hic labor est.

—Vergil, *Aeneid* vi. 126-29

"The descent to the underworld is easy: through day and night the door of black Dis lies open. But to retrace your steps and escape to the upper air—there is trouble and toil."



A Game of Exploration, Magic, and Adventure

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ERRATA

1. The point value in the lower left-hand corner of the Hero card should read 10 not 5.
2. The magical power on one of the Wizard cards is given as 2, which should be 5.

Before beginning play, remove the blank cards and the Sibyl from the small pack, and put these aside for variations on the basic game.

IN THE HEART OF A FOREST in a faraway land is the entrance to a vast underground labyrinth, the treasure-house of an evil Sorcerer. During his long lifetime of wicked deeds this Sorcerer has gathered immense wealth: heaps of silver and gold and glittering jewels, and artefacts of wondrous power. The fame of the Sorcerer's treasure-house has spread far and wide, and many a thief and adventurer longs to carry off a portion of the bounty. To protect his hoard, the Sorcerer has made by his magic arts an ever-changing Cave of many tunnels and chambers, and filled it with all manner of pitfalls and fearsome creatures to beset those who venture within.

Yet many still come to the Cave to match wits and strength with the Sorcerer, and with the other bands of brigands found there. You can be one of these adventurers. You may enter the Cave alone or with a few companions. Within its twisting passages and echoing caverns you may find friends, and enemies too. You will encounter magic which may help or harm you; you will find treasure; and perhaps you will meet the Sorcerer himself.

May you have good luck. But heed this warning: many do not return from the perils of the Sorcerer's Cave!

HOW TO USE THE RULES

First read the section entitled BASIC RULES. This gives you enough information to begin playing the game. As soon as an exploring party becomes involved in a fight, read the section called FIGHTS. If any other points arise which are not covered in these two sections, refer to the NOTES ON THE CARDS.

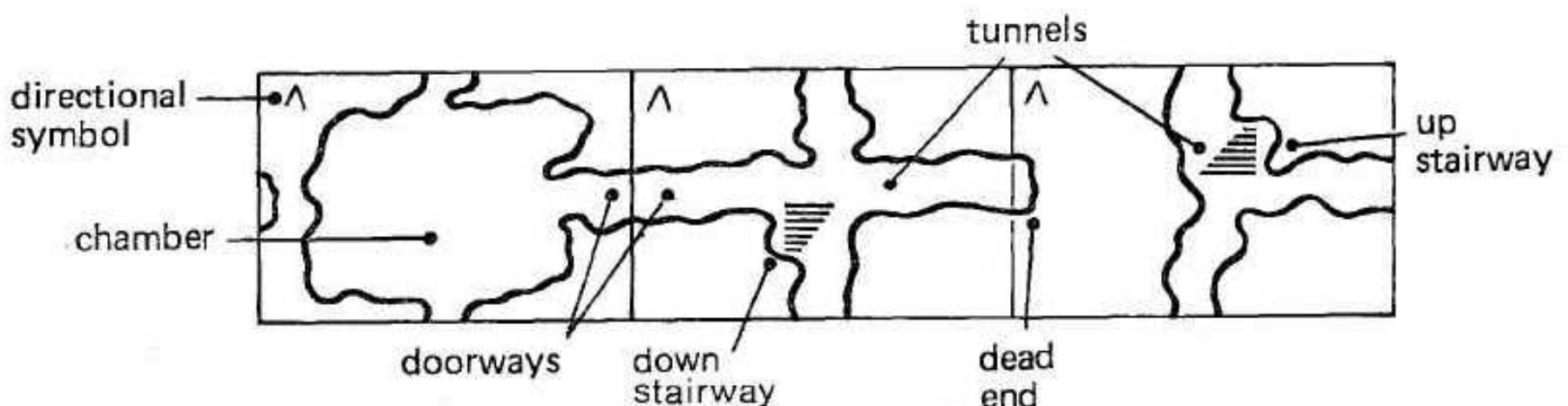
Until you have learned the basic principles of the game you are unlikely to need the rules governing PLAYER INTERACTION. These are followed by a section on OPTIONS AND VARIATIONS, which may be experimented with by experienced players.

The BASIC RULES are for a game with two to four players. Solitaire play is essentially the same; see under OPTIONS AND VARIATIONS. Any number of players may co-operate as a team in competitive or solitaire play. Young children who are not able to grasp all the rules can still enjoy helping make decisions, turning over cards, and so on.

BASIC RULES

Game Equipment

1. A pack of large cards, each of which is called an *area*. These cards are laid down one by one to form a map of the part of the Cave that has been explored. An area may be a *tunnel*, a *chamber*, or one of three special areas, the *gateway*, the *deep pool*, and the *viper pit*. Each area has two, three, or four *doorways* along the edges which may meet matching doorways on adjacent cards, or which may lead to *dead ends*. Some tunnels also have *stairways* which lead up or down to the centre of an area directly above or below.

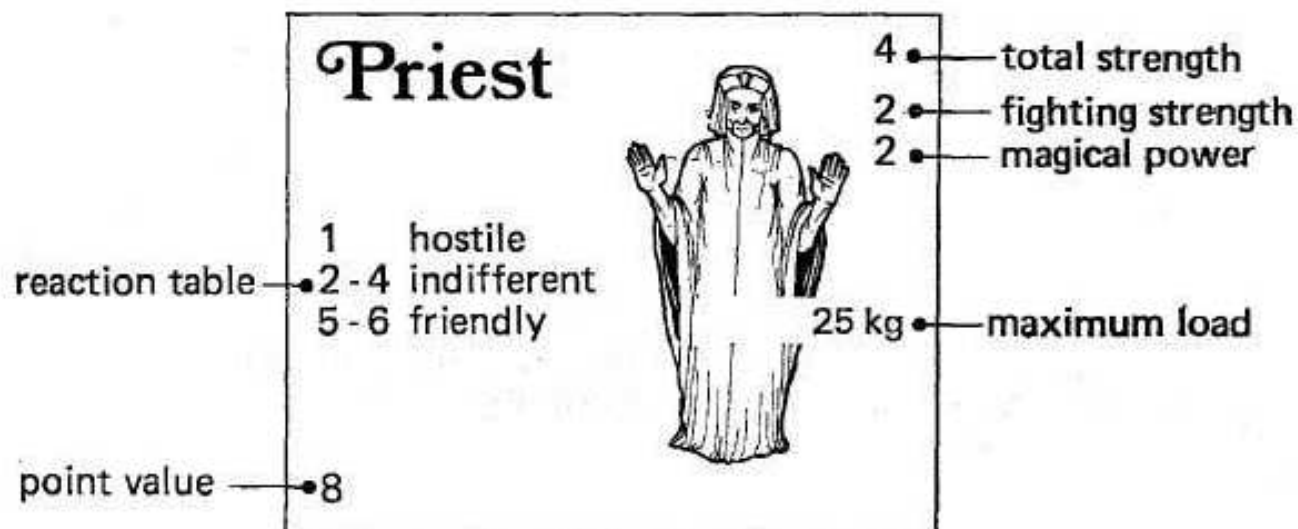


Each area card has a *directional symbol* which should be in the upper left-hand (northwest) corner

BASIC RULES

2. A pack of smaller cards, from which cards are drawn each time an exploring party enters a chamber that has not been explored before. These cards are of three types:

- a. **Hazard** cards. These represent phenomena or events that may affect the party entering the chamber.
- b. **Treasure** cards. These are of two kinds: *heavy treasure*, found mainly in sacks weighing 25 kg each; and *artefacts*, which for the purposes of the game are considered weightless.
- c. **Creature** cards. These represent various human and inhuman beings. Certain information about each creature is given on the card: fighting strength, magical power, and the weight it can carry, if any. The original exploring parties are made up of one or more creature cards. Creatures found within the Cave may, on being approached, react in a hostile, indifferent, or friendly manner to an exploring party, according to a die roll and the *reaction table* of the creature being tested.



Where only one figure appears in the upper right-hand corner, this total strength is equivalent to fighting strength.

Each treasure and creature that can be brought out of the Cave is worth a number of points, shown in the bottom left-hand corner.

3. A six-sided die, used in determining various events but not movement.
4. Four different tokens, each to represent an exploring party and to show its position on the map.
5. Plain markers of four different colours, used to orient different levels of the Cave to one another, and to mark secret doors.

Object

Players form exploring parties and, by turns, explore the Cave area by area until the large pack is exhausted or no one cares to go further. Play ends when all parties which are able to do so have left the Cave. The winner is the player whose party has left the Cave with the most points in creature and treasure cards. Points may also be acquired by slaying the Sorcerer.

Making Up the Exploring Parties

Players roll the die to determine order of play. The player who has first choice of an exploring party is the last to move, and vice versa.

Each player makes up his exploring party by choosing one or more creatures from the small pack, ignoring reaction tables. Referring to the table below, a player may select available creatures with a total *selection value* of 6; e.g. a priest and a woman, or a troll and two dwarves.

BASIC RULES

Type	Magical Power	Fighting Strength	Carries (kg)	Number in pack	Other Characteristics	Selection Value
Hero	—	5	75	1	Has charisma: adds 1 to die roll when testing strangers.	6
Woman-Hero	—	4	50	1	Has capabilities of woman and hero.	5
Ogre	—	5	100	3	Inhuman: cannot use most artefacts.	5
Troll	—	4	75	3	Inhuman.	4
Priest	2	2	25	3		4
Man	—	3	50	6		3
Woman	—	2	25	3	Befriends unicorn.	2
Dwarf	—	1	25	3	Inhuman. Guides past traps.	1

The composition of the exploring parties will change throughout the game as creatures and treasure are gained and lost. At all times the players should keep their holdings neatly arranged and open to view, each creature with whatever treasure it may be carrying. A player may redistribute treasure among the creatures of his party at the beginning or end of a turn, provided the party is not involved in a fight at the time.

After the exploring parties have been chosen, shuffle the small pack thoroughly and put it face down in a place handy to all the players.

Exploring the Cave

Remove the *gateway* card from the large pack and place it, face up, near one end of a spacious floor. Allow enough space around it for the first level to be explored in all directions, and allow plenty of space in the rest of the room for other levels to be mapped. Place the rest of the large pack face down in a convenient spot. Put the tokens representing the exploring parties on the gateway card. The parties are now just under the surface of the earth, on the highest level of a labyrinth that may have many deeper levels.

Play proceeds by *turns*. Basically it takes one turn to explore one area. But a variety of things may happen in one turn. In the following discussion, any event or decision which marks the end of a player's turn will be indicated thus: (*).

To explore an area, a player announces through which doorway his party intends to leave the area it is now in. He then draws the top card from the large pack and puts it in place next to the area his party is in. If his chosen doorway leads to a *dead end* on the new card, he places the card face down and leaves his party where it is (*). (Later a party may be able to enter this area from another direction, at which time it is turned face up.)

But if his chosen doorway matches a doorway in the new area, the player leaves the card face up and moves his token onto it. If the new area is a *tunnel* (*), the party can explore any of its doorways or stairways on the following turn. If it is the *viper pit* or *deep pool*, the player leaves his token just inside the doorway (*) and may proceed across the barrier and through another doorway on the following turn.

If the new area is a *chamber*, the player draws one or more cards from the small pack, and his turn continues as described in *Entering a Chamber*, below.

At any time a party may move through areas that have already been explored, at the rate of one area per turn. If it enters a chamber that has been previously explored no more small cards are drawn, but any hazards, creatures, or treasure remaining in the chamber must be dealt with in the usual way.

OPTIONS AND VARIATIONS

Hidden Cards

For beginners' or co-operative play it is recommended that all cards drawn from the small pack be shown to all the players and left face up. In serious competitive play, however, each player should keep as much information as possible to himself.

Players need keep on display in their parties only their creature cards and any artefact which is being used. (It is wise to keep the talisman on display so that ghouls and spectres can be passed by without comment.) They must also show the top edges of any other treasure cards they hold.

On first drawing cards from the small pack, a player need show only hazards which affect him. If he wishes to approach strangers, the leader must be shown. If he becomes involved in a fight with strangers, they must all be shown. Other cards may be left in the area, face down, and only another party which enters the area may see what they are.

An area card which has been left face down may be examined only in the normal course of exploration, even by the player who originally drew it. A small card which has been shown to all the players in accordance with the rules is left face up, and can be examined by any player at will.

Zombies

If this option is to be used, any creatures which die in the course of the game are not removed from play, but are left in the appropriate area, with their top edges toward the south. If all other creature cards are left either face down or with their top edges toward the north, it will be easy to distinguish the living from the dead. Dragons and spectres do not leave corpses.

When a player's entire party has been slain he cannot win the game, but he can try to keep any other player from winning. He forfeits one turn, then the body of the last creature of his party to die is resurrected as a zombie, along with any other bodies in the area. This party of zombies is moved by the player during his turn. Whenever the party enters an area containing dead creatures, these immediately rise up and join the party. If the party enters an area containing the Sorcerer, he and any companions join the party, subject to the same rules of movement but fighting as living creatures. All other living strangers are indifferent to zombies.

Zombies cannot carry or use treasure. They will not attack strangers. They are not affected by Medusa, vipers, or ghouls, but they will fall down traps unless accompanied by a living dwarf. They will not cross water. If the Sorcerer is with them they have access to all secret doors; otherwise they have access to none.

Zombies can form a union with other zombies. They can attack or be attacked by living creatures in the normal way. They have no magical power and may fight only with normal physical strength. A zombie which is "killed" is reanimated after one full turn of the controlling player has elapsed since the end of the fight, provided the main party of zombies is still in the area.

If the Sorcerer is killed all zombies are annihilated and no more may be created.

Solitaire Play

In solitaire play there is only one exploring party, and all rules governing turns and player interaction are ignored. Strangers which remain indifferent after three rolls of the die stay indifferent for the rest of the game. The player may set his own conditions for victory, or simply try to better previous scores.

Elaborations

The cards and the basic rules can be used to explore any situation that imagination suggests. New dimensions may be added to characters, or new creatures, hazards, and treasures may be created with the blank cards provided. (Use pencil, as new ideas may take some time to solidify.) Here are a few suggestions for new dimensions, creatures, and artefacts.

Damsels in distress. Any woman found in a group of strangers who are all inhuman, or in the company of the Sorcerer, is considered to be a captive of the strangers, and will be friendly to any party which slays them.

OPTIONS AND VARIATIONS

Cerberus. The three-headed dog of classical mythology. He has characteristics of a dragon, but must be slain three times before actually perishing.

Genie's lamp. When you rub it, roll a die. With score of 1 a hostile spectre appears; otherwise a friendly spectre. On being defeated, or at the end of the fight, the genie goes back into the lamp.

Scroll. On being read by any human, destroys all enemies in an area other than those with magical power. A curse on the party that uses it.

Sibyl. This card is provided but its use is optional. She does not guard treasure found with her. She is not affected by mutiny. She will not be the only member of a party.

Special Scenarios

The object of the game may be altered, and certain features of the Cave may be determined beforehand. In some scenarios the acquisition of heavy treasure may not be an object; but these cards should be left in play, to preserve balance.

The Sorcerer's Den. The great cavern is placed on the fourth level directly under the gateway. Certain small cards may be placed here beforehand, and others drawn on entry to make a total of six. The object may be to reach this area and slay the Sorcerer. A good solitaire game has Orpheus (hero with charmed flute) trying to rescue Eurydice (woman in Den with the Sorcerer) and bring her to the surface.

The Quest. A valuable treasure, such as the ring or the treasure chest full of gold, is put in a hard-to-get-at place, such as in the Sorcerer's Den, or on the island in the viper pit at the centre of the third level and guarded by a spectre. In a competitive game, certain tasks may be assigned to each player by secret lot, with extra points awarded for the accomplishment of the tasks. These tasks might include killing a giant (10 points), reaching the fifth level (20), finding the magic sword and killing a spectre with it (25), and carrying the lost ruby to the island in the viper pit (40).

The Ringbearer. A party with a selection value of 4 tries to carry the ring from the gateway to the deep pool, which is at the centre of the fourth level. This party has a head start of seven turns over a party of three trolls, whose object is to capture the ring and bring it to the surface. The Sorcerer and companions are indifferent to the troll-party. The game ends when either party achieves its goal.